

Planning, Design and Access Statement

for:

Outbuilding for use as an annexe

at:

13 Cornfield Road
Woodley
Berkshire
RG5 4QA

February 2025

dmh
planning
info@dmhplanning.co.uk
www.dmhplanning.co.uk

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Site:

13 Cornfield Road, Woodley, RG5 4QA

Applicant:

Mrs Boonaert

Document revisions

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Statement accompanies a householder application which is submitted to Wokingham Borough Council for the erection an outbuilding for use as an annexe for a family member to use at 13 Cornfield Road.

1.2 The application property is located on the northern side of the of Cornfield Road and is a two storey semi-detached dwelling.

1.3 The property has the following recent planning history referenced online:

172339 | Householder application for the proposed erection of first floor side extension to create habitable accommodation plus erection of front porch | Status: Approved 20 September 2017

1.4 The application site is not located within an area at risk from flooding, and the dwellinghouse is not Listed nationally or locally and neither are the neighbouring dwellings.

1.5 The application site is not located within a Conservation Area, but is located within the major development location of Woodley.

2.0 Planning Analysis

Nationally

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and revised in July 2018, February 2019, July 2021 and again in September and December 2023, with the latest revisions issued in December 2024.
- 2.2 The NPPF provides the Government's framework for delivering sustainable development and facilitating economic growth through the planning process. Planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 2.3 Paragraph 8 states that there are 3 dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. Development which helps to build a strong, responsive and competitive economy whilst supporting vibrant and healthy communities, providing housing to meet current and future requirements is to be achieved in a manner which protects the natural, built and historic environment.
- 2.4 The NPPF states at Paragraph 11 that at the heart of the document is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For decision taking this means approving development proposals which accord with the development plan without delay and local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of the area. The presumption in favour of sustainable development is reiterated at Paragraph 50.
- 2.5 Paragraph 39 sets out that the Local Planning Authority should approach applications in a "positive and creative way" and should work collectively with the applicant to ensure that development is delivered to benefit the area socially, economically and environmentally.

- 2.6 Paragraph 48 states that applications should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 2.7 With regard to transport implications paragraph 116 is very clear in stating that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation would be severe, taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.
- 2.8 Paragraph 124 of the NPPF sets out that planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses.
- 2.9 Paragraph 129 requires policies and decisions to support development which makes “efficient use of land”. The criteria also includes matters such as maintaining the area’s prevailing character and setting and the importance of well-designed, attractive and healthy places.
- 2.10 Section 12 of the NPPF highlights the need for achieving well designed places.
- 2.11 The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities is discussed in paragraph 131.
- 2.12 Paragraph 135 points to the fact that development should be sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.

2.13 The key points from Paragraph 135 where it sets out that Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change;
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of spaces, to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places visit;
- e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

Locally

- 2.14 Wokingham Borough adopted their Core Strategy in January 2010 and their Managing Development Delivery (MDD) Local Plan in February 2014.
- 2.15 The policies that are considered of relevance from these Development Plan Documents include CP1 (Sustainable Development), CP3 (General Principles for Development), CP9 (Scale and Location of Development Proposals) and from the Core Strategy and CC01 (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development), CC02 (Development Limits), CC03 (Green Infrastructure, trees and landscaping), CC04 (Sustainable Design and Construction) and CC07 (Parking) from the MDD.
- 2.16 Policy CP1 of the Core Strategy refers to Sustainable Development whereby development should amongst other things maintain or enhance the high quality of the environment and provide attractive, functional and adaptable schemes.
- 2.17 Policy CP3 of the Core Strategy states that development must be appropriate in terms of its scale of activity, mass, layout, built form, height, materials and character to the area in which it is located and must be of high quality design without detriment to the amenities of adjoining land uses and occupiers.
- 2.18 Scale and location of development is covered by the wording of Policy CP9 which considers that the scale of the development proposal must reflect the existing or proposed levels of facilities and services at or in the location.
- 2.19 Policy CC01 of the MDD states that planning applications that accord with the policies in the Development Plan for Wokingham Borough will be approved without delay.
- 2.20 The development limits for each settlement are identified on the Policies Map and is linked to the wording of Policy CC02.

2.21 Development proposals should consider how they relate to green infrastructure, trees and landscaping as part of the proposal, and this is covered under Policy CC03.

2.22 Achieving sustainable design and construction is addressed in the wording of Policy CC04.

2.23 Parking provisions for development are covered by Policy CC07 and states that the provisions should accord with the standards set out in Appendix 2 of the MDD.

Key Planning Considerations

2.24 The key planning considerations are the following:

- i. Principle of Development and Design Quality
- ii. Relationship with neighbouring properties
- iii. Other Planning Matters

i) Principle of Development and Design Quality

2.25 The proposal is for an ancillary building to be used as an annexe for a family member, with the building to be located within the curtilage of the main dwelling.

2.26 The outbuilding that will form the annexe will be located within the rear garden.

2.27 The proposed development, given that the site is located within a built-up, is in general planning terms considered to be acceptable in principle, demonstrating a compliance with Policies CP1, CC01 and CC02.

- 2.28 The scale and size of the outbuilding would conform to the dimensions as set out in the General Permitted Development Order for outbuildings and structures to be located within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse. It's siting, height and scale would meet with criteria for Class E. This would, based on its size and setting demonstrate a compliance with Policies CP3 and CP9.
- 2.29 However, it is noted that whilst this may be the case, and whilst there are clear examples of outbuildings being approved by the Council under a householder application where they exceed the criteria set out within the GDPO, this application is proposing that the outbuilding is used as an annexe for a family member to use.
- 2.30 The family member has disabilities but is of an age where they are also seeking independence. This ancillary use would provide that benefit to the family member.
- 2.31 Whilst the situation has not arisen yet, there will be a requirement within the next 5 years for an elderly member of the family to require close care and attention.
- 2.32 A personal statement by the applicant has been prepared and submitted with this application outlining the personal needs of family members.
- 2.33 There are several cases at local level and through appeals of such annexes being granted permission or allowed at appeal where the assessment has been made that such a use would remain ancillary to the main dwellinghouse and not become a separate dwelling.
- 2.34 It is acknowledged that each site should be assessed on its own merits and that where in some settings the use of an outbuilding for residential purposes is deemed to be ancillary, and it is deemed that this scheme would fall into that assessment criteria.

- 2.35 Accordingly, it is considered that this application, where the outbuilding is located within the rear garden, and where there the access to the rear garden is limited, that the principle of development would be acceptable in this instance and that it would not be possible for a separate dwelling to be created in this location.
- 2.36 It is also observed that more specific examples for ‘granny’ annexes have been granted locally through planning applications 132388, 210546, 232856 and 241505. These are just a sample, with many others available for viewing on the Council website, as already highlighted earlier in this Statement.
- 2.37 It is therefore deemed that an ancillary outbuilding to be used for personal use as an annexe is acceptable in principle. And with this proposal doing just that, the development submitted is acceptable in principle.
- 2.38 With regards to the overall design the outbuilding consideration has been given to the relevant policies of the Core Strategy and the MDD Local Plan of Wokingham Borough Council, as was the relevant wording from Section 12 of the NPPF.
- 2.39 As already stated, the design of the outbuilding has followed the design parameters set out within the GPDO. Its height would be no taller than 2.5m and the outbuilding would have a flat roof.
- 2.40 General living environment for the users of the annexe are considered to be acceptable as the scheme is not proposing a new dwelling, and there would be no sub-division of the plot and no defined curtilage given to the outbuilding as it would be used for ancillary purposes and not a new self-contained dwelling.
- 2.41 The proximity of the ancillary building to the main dwellinghouse means that the nature of the relationship between the two would mean that it is highly unlikely that a separate dwelling would ever be achieved in the future, given the high level of mutual overlooking that would result.

2.42 The materials for it to be constructed out of consist of mix of metal and composite cladding and an EDPM rubber roof are sympathetic to the setting and would not appear out of keeping.

2.43 Given the scale of development and the outbuildings siting in the rear garden, together with the appropriate choice of materials that have been proposed, there would be no detrimental impacts on the character of the area, or immediate street scene as the outbuilding would not be visible from the public realm.

2.44 The proposal, as can be seen from the plans submitted as part of this application, have resulted in a high quality design which make efficient use of the plot without the scheme resulting in an overdevelopment of the plot.

2.45 The proposed development can therefore be considered to comply with the wording of Policies CP3, CP9 and CC04 from the Wokingham Development Plan, as well as paragraphs 131 and 135 from Section 12 of the NPPF.

2.46 In addition to this the proposed works would comply with the following Design Principles of the Wokingham Borough Design Guide: R1 (Character and Context) as the proposed works respond well to the existing character of the dwelling; R17 as it provides a well thought out internal layout; and R23 as the outbuilding, although not strictly speaking an extension, is well designed, responds positively to the original building, contributes to the local character and would not impact on any neighbouring properties.

ii) Relationship with neighbouring properties

2.47 The application property is located within a residential area, and it is not uncommon for outbuildings to be constructed within the rear gardens of properties, whether through permitted development or requiring planning permission.

2.48 The scheme needs to be of an appropriate scale however, so as not to cause harm to the neighbouring properties when the work proposed requires planning permission. In this instance, and as already stated, the building has actually been designed so as to accord with the parameters set out within the General Permitted Development Order for Outbuildings (Class E).

2.49 Consequently, if the building had been proposed for purposes incidental to the enjoyment of the dwellinghouse, a formal application would not have been required as permission would be deemed as being granted as a result of it complying with permitted development criteria.

2.50 So whilst planning permission is required due to the ancillary nature of the proposal, the scale of development would not result in harm being caused to the amenities of the neighbouring properties.

2.51 The proposed outbuilding is therefore considered to comply with Policy CP3 and CP9 of the Wokingham Borough Core Strategy, and paragraphs 131 and 135 of the NPPF.

iii) Other Planning Matters

Biodiversity/Ecology/Habitats

2.52 The proposed works are not considered to have adverse impacts on ecology or biodiversity. Whilst the development would be exempt from be required to provide biodiversity enhancements or require a biodiversity metric to be submitted.

Flood Risk

2.53 The application site is not located within flood risk zones 2 or 3 and is there not at risk of flooding from rivers.

Highways/Transport

- 2.54 There are no highways or transport implications with regards to this proposal.
- 2.55 The proposal does not result in any changes to the access with the highway. It would not result in an adverse impact on the highways network and as such would accord with the wording of paragraph 116 of the NPPF.
- 2.56 In terms of parking provision, appropriate levels of parking are provided at the site and the proposed outbuilding would not affect the parking requirements.
- 2.57 The application can therefore be seen to be compliant with Policy CC07 of the Wokingham Borough Local Plan.

3.0 Conclusion

- 3.1 The development complies with the Policies of the Wokingham Borough Development Plan Documents, the Core Strategy and Local Plan, as well as the wording of the NPPF.
- 3.2 The application is applying for an annexe to accommodate a family member that has disabilities, with the intention to then accommodate an elderly family member in later years. Both users would benefit from having an element of independence, but also the opportunity to have a provision of close care and attention provided for them.
- 3.3 It is acknowledged that the proposed accommodation is a permanent structure providing a separate living set-up, however the unit is small and would not be capable of operating as an independent residential unit from the main dwelling. Both the occupants of the main dwellinghouse and the occupant of the annexe would have appropriate garden amenity space to use that is of a sufficient size to serve both.
- 3.4 And in light of the fact that the Council have approved such schemes against the current set of policies it demonstrates an acceptability of annexes within the rear gardens of dwellings, and in particular where it is clear that they cannot become separate dwellings as is the case with this application and application site.
- 3.5 Taking the above into account, this Planning Application to create an ancillary accommodation to be used as an annexe to the main dwellinghouse should be granted permission.